**Literacy Assessment 2011-12**

**Our Transition Plan**

As part of its reform efforts, the state of Colorado is moving to a new assessment system.

By December 2011, the State Board will adopt revised CBLA rules, adopt a protocol for assessing numeracy, and approve CBLA assessment tools if necessary. These potential changes may have an impact on the assessments that we use district-wide to monitor early literacy and numeracy. Thus, the team of teachers and administrators working on assessment practices is recommending 2011-12 be a transition year.

Ongoing assessment is a key component of an effective literacy program. A wide range of assessments, formal to informal, qualitative to quantitative, large-scale to classroom-based is needed as no one single method of assessment can provide information about the achievement of the full range of literacy learning. A combination of different data sources is vital if we are to get a balanced picture of student, school, and district performance. Assessment is not an event, or an end unto itself. It is a critical and contributing step in the teaching-learning cycle.

A comprehensive assessment system includes the following assessment tools and should help us answer key questions:

* Screener
* Can our students read a variety of grade level appropriate materials and comprehend what they have read?
* Can our students critically respond to what they have read and transfer their learning to new situations?
* Can our students communicate effectively in spoken and written form?
* Diagnostic/Progress Monitoring
* What literacy skills does this student possess?
* What literacy skills does this student need?
* Is the student making progress in literacy?
* End of Year Proficiency:
* Can our students read a variety of grade level appropriate materials and comprehend what they have read?
* Can our students critically respond to what they have read and transfer their learning to new situations?
* Can our students communicate effectively in spoken and written form?

The required district assessments should be considered as one aspect of the Thompson School District Comprehensive Assessment Model. Using screeners, diagnostics, progress monitoring measures, and end of year assessments certainly will inform the answers to these questions. To answer these questions fully, teachers need to use data from our formal testing periods as well as a variety of classroom formative assessments and observations. Ultimately, it is the use formative assessments that will be the catalyst that transforms the way a teacher teaches by making evidence-based decisions about learning.

**Purpose of Literacy Assessments**

Data analysis should not be about just gathering data. It is very easy to get “analysis paralysis” by spending time putting data together and not spending time using the data.

Victoria Bernhard, 1998

**Literacy Assessment Beliefs**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Literacy Beliefs** | **Daily Instructional Activity** |
| 1. Assessment defines stages of literacy development. | 1. Instruction and assessment support one another, not sacrificing one for the other:   * Running records * Standards * Work samples |
| 2. Assessment assists teachers and parents in evaluating, modifying and prescribing appropriate literacy instructional strategies. | 2. The floor, as well as the ceiling, is raised through:   * Personalized instruction * Acceleration * Parent conferences * ILP/ALP/IEP * Matching text to students * Reduced class size for literacy * Literacy block |
| 3. Assessment identifies qualitatively and quantitatively those child who may need increased experiences and more intensive help in reading. | 3. A wide range of assessments--formal to informal, qualitative to quantitative, large-scale to classroom-based—are needed as no one single method of assessment can provide complete information about the achievement of the full range of literacy learning. A body of evidence is built through:   * Observation * Anecdotal notes * Writing samples * Work samples * Standards * Grade level expectations * Priority learnings * CSAP results * Running records * Guided Reading Level |
| 4. Assessment provides a profile that describes a child’s literacy development and programs to other teachers, parents, and administrators. | 4. An individual literacy profile is maintained that contains a body of evidence. In addition to assessment results, the profile may contain:   * Student work * Teacher observations * Interviews * Self-reflections * Progress toward standards |
| 5. More data does not necessarily lead to better decisions. | 5. Teachers need the appropriate metrics to guide their literacy instructional decisions. Time to dialogue and make meaning about the data is key. |
| 6. Proficient reading is more than the sum of its parts. | 6. Effective assessment provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to read and understand connected text. Assessments that focus on the parts of reading are helpful in diagnosis and progress monitoring. |

**Building a Body of Evidence**

**What is a Body of Evidence?**

A Body of Evidence is a collection of information about student progress toward reading proficiency. The collection incorporates data from multiple assessments and assessment methods, such as running records, observations, student self-assessment, and reading inventories. The purpose of the Body of Evidence is to provide data that will enable educators to justify a decision about a student’s reading performance.

A Body of Evidence, by definition, contains more than one kind of assessment. It must include multiple assessments and assessment methods. No single assessment can provides sufficient evidence to judge a student’s progress. In addition, given that different assessment methods are better suited to assessing particular kinds of learning, a variety of assessments are needed to give a comprehensive picture of a student’s progress in relation to the standards.

One needs as many assessments as it takes to give a complete picture of a student’s reading achievement. Successful reading means different things at different grade levels. At grade 4 students need to be independent readers as they tackle both narrative and expository text. Successful reading in only one genre or reading with the teacher’s guidance does not demonstrate that a student is proficient. Grade level expectations, standards, and curriculum alignment help us further define successful reading at each grade level.

**How do I compile a Body of Evidence?**

Begin with artifacts of reading and writing that you are already collecting. These artifacts include running records, periodic writing samples, written responses to reading, and anecdotal records. The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will determine the learning goals a teacher’s instruction needs to address for each child. It is the teacher’s role to think about what evidence will demonstrate the student is making progress in relation to the targeted grade level expectations. Collect the Body of Evidence in an ongoing cycle (such as once a week, once a month, once a quarter). Consider asking for parent input to make the Body of Evidence even richer. It is important to periodically review and update the collection of information and artifacts. As the child makes progress, add new artifacts to the Body of Evidence. The goal is to create a streamlined, comprehensive picture of a child’s abilities as a reader.

**What happens to the Body of Evidence at the end of the school year?**

The Body of Evidence moves with the child from grade to grade. At the end of the year, each teacher reviews the Body of Evidence to make sure it provides an accurate and current picture of the child as a reader and writer. This may mean updating or removing some items. The Body of Evidence allows literacy instruction to continue effectively and efficiently from one grade level to the next. Each grade level is seen as part of the continuing story of the child’s literacy development instead of starting over each school year.

**Correlation of Instructional Reading Levels**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade Level** | **Reading**  **Recovery** | **Lexile Levels** | **Guided Reading**  **(Fountas and Pinnell)** | **QRI** | **DRA2** |
| K | 1  2 |  | A  B |  | A  1  2 |
| Grade 1 | 3-4  5-6  7-8  9-10  11-12  13-14  15-16 | 200-299 (1.5-2.0) | C D E  F G H I | PP  P  1 | 3  4  6-8  10  12  14  16 |
| Grade 2 | 18-20  24-28 | 300-399 (2.0-2.5)  400-499 (2.5-3.0) | I  J-K  L-M | 1  2 | 18-20  24-28 |
| Grade 3 | 30  34-38 | 500-599 (3.0-3.5)  600-699 (3.5-4.0) | N  O-P | 3  4 | 30  34-38 |
| Grade 4 | 40 | 700-799 (4.0-5.0) | Q-R | 4  5 | 40 |
| Grade 5 | 44 | 800-899 (5.5-6.0) | S-T | 5  6 | 44 |
| Grade 6 |  | 900-999 (6.0-7.0) | U-V | 6  UM |  |

Data are to goals what signposts are to travelers; data are not endpoints, but data are essential to reaching them—the signposts on the road to school improvement.

Mike Schmoker, 1996

**Using Assessment to Drive Instruction**

**Running Records**

A running record is a tool for coding, scoring, and analyzing a child’s reading behaviors. Running records measure a student’s reading skills and strategies as he or she reads connected text. A student is asked to read a book and retell and/or answer comprehension questions. As a student reads the text, the teacher uses codes to indicate a student’s miscues (errors) in word accuracy and strategies that are used while the student reads the text. The student is then asked questions to determine understanding of what has been read or to provide a retell. A combined score of word accuracy and comprehension results in an instructional reading level for a student.

A running record is one of the best ways to monitor progress of beginning readers because it allows the teacher to:

* Observe precisely what children are saying and doing
* Use tasks that are close to the learning tasks of the classroom
* Observe what children have and have not been able to learn
* Shift instruction to reading strategies that are based in context

Running records are administered frequently to continue to determine a student’s strategy application and reliance on cueing systems. The student’s retelling of text and/or answers to the teacher’s questions give further insight into his/her comprehension of text. Running records are a part of the student’s Body of Evidence.

There are many variations of running record forms available for teachers to use. The choice of a running record form is a grade level/school decision. Essential components of running record forms include places to:

* Record miscues
* Record cueing systems used at the point of error
* Note reading behaviors
* Record self-corrections
* Code and score word attack and comprehension information used to determine total reading level (independent, instructional, frustration).

**The Three Reading Cue Systems**

Prior Knowledge

Story Sense

Grammatical patterns and language structures (language registers)

Knowledge of English

Natural Language

Text (word, sentence, whole text)

Analogies

Conventions of Print

--Directionality

--Words/spaces

--Letters

--Beginnings/endings

Illustrations, Format (bolded print, italics)

**Running Records**

**Levels of Analysis**

The strength of the running record lies in the analysis of each child’s reading behaviors. By analyzing reading miscues and comprehension answers, a teacher is able to determine reading strengths, strategies, needs, and patterns of behavior upon which to design instructional activities. Analysis of running records gives focus to the daily literacy instruction for a student. Students are grouped for literacy instruction based on instructional reading levels and strategy use. Ian Morrison describes four levels of analysis in **Getting It Together**:

**Level 1: Scoring Level**

A reading level is determined by combining word accuracy and comprehension performance.

**Level 2: Cue Usage (Semantic, Syntactic, Graphophonic)**

Analysis of running record miscues focuses upon the cueing systems the student is using while reading. There are three cueing systems: semantic (does it make sense?); syntactic (does it sound right?); and graphophonic (Does it look right?). Identifying the cueing system(s) the student primarily relies on guides the teacher in providing appropriate reading instruction for that student. The teacher makes a determination of why a particular miscue was made and if it was self-corrected, how it was self-corrected: Did it make sense? Did it sound right? Did it look right?

**Level 3: Strategy Usage**

This level of analysis looks even further than cue use to the reading behaviors that are applied through the reading process. The reading behaviors the student demonstrates in a running record are coded and recorded. These reading behaviors are strategies such as self-correct, rereading, or cross checking that the student uses to read and understand the words.

**Level 4: Comprehension**

Comprehension is an active process and can be seen in the running record as the reading behaviors tell us what the child is doing to bring meaning to the text. Students predict and ask questions as they read text, and reach understandings of text as those questions are answered. In the analysis of a running record for instance, a student may self-correct miscues; make meaningful substitutions; use fluent speech, phrasing and expression; or reread text for understanding. There may be stumbling blocks that interfere with the student’s comprehension of text. These may include text form, word structure, vocabulary, or lack of background knowledge. Level 4 analysis aids the teacher in understanding what the student is doing to gain understanding and what is getting in the student’s way of comprehending. This information guides instruction for that student.

**Coding A Running Record**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Behavior | Code | Description | Score |
| Accurate Reading | 🗸🗸🗸🗸🗸🗸 | Record a check for each word read accurately | No error |
| Substitution | home  house | The reader’s attempt is placed over the accurate word on a line | One error |
| Several attempts | h/ho/🗸  house | The reader made two attempts to solve the word and then reached a solution | No error |
| Self-correction | she sc  shop | The symbol SC following the child’s correct attempt indicates a SC at point of error | No error  One SC |
| Insertion | little  - | The word inserted by the child is placed above the line and a dash placed below | One error |
| Omission | \_-\_  big | A dash is placed on a line above each word omitted in the text | One error |
| Omission of lines | was  🗸 🗸 🗸 🗸  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  the dog is big | If a line or sentence is omitted, redirect to the omitted lines(s) | One error for redirect and score the next recording as usual |
| Omission of page(s) | Note omission of page(s) | Child misses a page or turns two together; redirect child to the missing page(s) | One error for redirect and score the next recording as usual |
| Repeated errors | swim  swam  Jill  Jane | If the child makes an error (swim for swam) and then substitutes this word repeatedly, it counts as an error every time; but substitution of a proper noun (Jill for Jane) is counted only the first time—even if various alternate substitutions are made | Repeated errors count every time  One error for proper noun substitution |
| Appeal | A  run | If child appeals to teacher for unknown word, an A is written above the line. | No error |
| Repetition | ride R | Place an R after a single word repeated. R2/R3/R4/ indicates the child repeated the phrase more than once. | No error |
| Repetition of a phrase | Ride up and  ­\_🗸\_🗸 🗸 🗸 | For a repeated phrase, draw a line to the point to which the child returned. R2/R3/R4/ indicates the child repeated the phrase more than once. | No error |
| Mispronunciation (articulation or dialect) | caw M  car | If a child mispronounces a word due to dialect or a speech impediment, record the mispronunciation and code with an M | No error |
| Told | -  this T | In rare instances, if there is no attempt, the word is told to the child and T is written below the line | One error |
| Try That Again | 🗸 look said  Tracy went with  🗸 🗸 Tom  the teacher to  Look/w/sc  went TTA | When the child is in a tangle, teacher instructs child to “Try That Again.” One error for saying TTA, then only second attempt is scored. | Whole bracket is counted as one error and score the next recording as usual |

**Running Record Form**

Running Record for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Seen Text\_\_\_Unseen Text\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Level\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_# of Words\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Accuracy\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Level: 🗆 Independent 95-100% 🗆 Instructional 90-94%

Error Rate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Self-Correction Rate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ E+SC\_\_\_\_\_Words Correct\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Running Record | # |  | | | Errors | | | Self Correction | | |  |  |  |
|  |  | M | S | V | M | S | V | M | S | V |  | Ind | Att |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | TRACKING |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Loses place |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Skips line |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Able to SC |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Does not SC |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Re-reads |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | READING BEHAVIORS |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Letter-sound correspondence |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Sight word vocab |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Understands words |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | AT DIFFICULTY |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Re-reads |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Reads on |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Makes attempt using MSV |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | AFTER AN ERROR |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Ignores |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Re-reads |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Attempts to SC using MSV |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | FLUENCY |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Word by word |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Reads in phrases |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Fluent w/expression |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | pacing |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | OTHER READING BEHAVIORS |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Many hesitations and pauses |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Makes and confirms logical predictions |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Does not read through entire word |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Takes too long to process unknown words |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Reads nonsense words |  |  |

**Calculations for Running Records**

Error rate: running words

Errors

Self Correction Rate: E+SC

SC

Accuracy

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Error Rate | Percent Accurate | Notes |
| 1:200 | 99.5 | Good opportunity to observe children’s reading work. |
| 1:100 | 99 |
| 1:50 | 98 |
| 1:35 | 97 |
| 1:25 | 96 |
| 1:20 | 95 |
| 1:17 | 94 |
| 1:14 | 93 |
| 1:12.5 | 92 |
| 1:11.75 | 91 |
| 1:10 | 90 |
| 1:9 | 89 | Readers tend to lose the support of the meaning of the text. |
| 1:8 | 87.5 |
| 1:7 | 85.5 |
| 1:6 | 83 |
| 1:5 | 80 |
| 1:4 | 75 |
| 1:3 | 66 |
| 1:2 | 50 |

**Writing Assessment**

The ongoing collection and analysis of writing samples is part of the comprehensive literacy model and is an important part of the Body of Evidence. It is expected that schools formalize this practice at least three times a year. Writing samples are scored using a rubric to assign a value; however, it is the **collective** analysis of writing behaviors accompanying the quantitative score that is invaluable for instruction.

**Procedures for Writing Assessment**

1. Select the writing rubric that will be used. Many schools have already developed a writing rubric; others may choose to use the CSAP writing rubric, the 6+1 Traits Writing Rubric, or the rubric that is available with Becoming a Writer. The same rubric should be used by all teachers at the same grade level and there should be coherence between grade levels.

2. Determine when the formal writing sample will be gathered. The writing sample should be part of a regular classroom unit of study—not an isolated task.

3. Determine the mode of writing (retell/recount, procedure, persuasive, narrative, description) the sample will address. New grade level expectations can be your guide. Determine whether there will be a writing prompt or if it is a “free” write.

4. Determine how each grade level will analyze its writing sample. Will you score individually or collectively? How will you use the data gathered from the writing rubric? What protocol will you use for looking at student work? Case Study? Descriptive Review? Atlas? How will you monitor progress between formal assessments?

** Learning from Student Work**

“*To be a teacher in the right sense is to be a learner. Instruction begins when you, the teacher, learn from the learner, put yourself in his place so that you may understand what he understands and in the way he understands it.”* — *Soren Kierkegaard*

**Principles of Looking at Student Work**

* Students’ work in schools is serious
* Students’ work is key data about the life of the school
* Must be connected to serious changes in curriculum, instruction and professional development

**Purposes of Looking at Student Work**

* Professional Development
* Accountability (determining effectiveness of curriculum and instruction)
* Setting standards
* Reflecting on student learning and development

**Protocols**

* **What?**
* Guidelines for conversation
* Vehicle for building collaborative work
* **Why?**
* Creates a structured environment for: speaking, listening, questioning
* Makes the most of limited time
* Promotes deep, meaningful conversation about teaching and learning
* **How?**
* Incorporate into your study group meetings/grade level meetings/staff meetings
* Connect it to crucial teaching and learning issues in your study group/grade level/school
* Practice it regularly

**Results**

* **Teachers who present work typically find:**
* Some of their own impressions about student work are confirmed
* They are likely to gain new insights into the thinking of their students
* The strengths and weaknesses of their assignments
* **Other teachers who participate**
* Develop a sense of the kind and quality of the work going on inside their school
* Learn about students they will teach in future years
* See how students they taught in previous years have developed
* Gain new ideas for their own classrooms
* Begin to develop a shared understanding of standards in different domains and the steps students go through to meet them.

**Protocols to Guide Discussions about Student Work**

Atlas: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/atlas_lfsw.pdf>

Collaborative Assessment Conference: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/cac.pdf>

Consultancy: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/consult_stud_work.pdf>

Describing Student’s Work: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/describing_students_work.pdf>

Examining Student’s Work: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/constructivist_student.pdf>

Debriefing Questions: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/debrief_questions_lasw.pdf>

Focusing Questions:<http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/focus_questions_lasw.pdf>

Standards in Practice: <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/standards_lasw.pdf>

Tuning Protocol: http://www.nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/tuning.pdf